



Southwest Career and Technical Academy

RESEARCHING, TRACKING, RANKING YOUR POST SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

THE DOCUMENTS BELOW ARE TO HELP SIMPLY YOUR SEARCH FOR POST SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS AND TO HELP NAVIGATE YOU THROUGH THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS. PLEASE ALSO VIEW THE “NAVIGATING THE COLLEGE ADMISSION PROCESS POWERPOINT SLIDE SHOW ON THIS FLASH DRIVE”.

Top Ten Ways to "Test Drive" a College

- 1. Learn about the college before you visit.** Read materials from the college and check out their web site. If you are visiting more than one on a particular day, refresh your memory about that school just before you arrive. Be sure to spend at least one-half day at each college.
- 2. Evaluate the environment of the campus.** Is the campus too big or too small for you? Do you like the nearby town or do you feel isolated? Consider how you would get around campus particularly in the rain or snow.
- 3. Visit the admissions office and participate in the information session.** Ask questions that help you clarify the academic program at the school and the type of student who is most comfortable and successful there. You may choose to have a formal interview with an admissions staff member. Bring a resume of your grades and activities. Dress nicely, but not out of character.
- 4. Take the student-led tour of campus.** Take advantage of the opportunity to ask questions about campus life from a peer. Recognize, however, that tour guides are not necessarily typical of all students since they formally represent the school.
- 5. Check out the dorms.** Find out about the dorm options available, such as all-Freshman or co-ed. Arrange in advance to spend the night in a dorm, if possible. Picture yourself living in a dorm. Are you comfortable with where they are located on campus, such as the proximity to classes or the campus center?
- 6. Arrange for campus meetings with department heads in the subjects that interest you, coaches in sports where you excel, and former graduates from your high school.** Bring a resume that highlights your experience in your area of expertise. Ask about opportunities based on your skills and interests. Write down the names of any officials you meet with and send personal thank-you notes when you return home.
- 7. Sit in on classes and check out the library.** How is the rapport between students and faculty in the classroom? Look through the books at the library in your area of interest. Look for quiet places to study.
- 8. Look into life beyond academics.** Check out the athletic facilities, theater, and student center. Read the notices up in the dorms or on bulletin boards. Can you see yourself joining in?
- 9. Have lunch in the student center and watch student interactions.** Talk with students all over campus about their impressions of the school. Look at the students themselves. Do you feel comfortable among the students?
- 10. After each visit, write down your impressions of that college.** After a while, the visions of different schools start to blur if you don't immediately stop to record your thoughts! Keep a list of pros and cons for comparison.

Factors to Consider in Making Your College List

Location: California, Nevada, Utah, East Coast, etc. Where do relatives live? What type of transportation is necessary to travel to and from home?

Size:

The size of the campus: 1 acre or 400 acres?

Enrollment: 25 to 50,000 students

Setting of campus:

Rural / Suburban / Urban Which are you more familiar with?

Academics:

What majors? What minors? Double major? Can you change your major, how often?

Learning environment:

Large classroom, discussion group, small class size, and accessibility of professors: What works for you?

Extracurricular options:

Intramural sports, clubs, and organizations: What to do outside of class.

Housing options:

Type and availability of dorms and other student housing. Roommate issues

Cost to attend:

\$12,000 to \$58,000 per year. Do you plan to attend grad school?

Academic reputation:

Ranking of college often is subjective and developed over time.

School spirit:

NCAA sports? Banana slug vs. Trojans: PAC 10 or Patriot League

SOURCE: IECA website: www.educationalconsultanting.org

How and when to start the college application process

1. It is never too early to visit colleges and college websites
2. Use the internet to gain detailed admissions information and the list for local events
3. Sign up for college tours and special visit days online at the college website
4. Take a strong academic schedule, at least four to five academic classes every semester
5. Take your SAT and ACT tests during your Junior year

- 1st Recognize YOUR personal strengths and goals and think about the social and academic environments available at various colleges
- 2nd Do research as to the programs and or majors that meet your goals and the colleges that have the type of environment you want to live in for the next four years (location & activities)
- 3rd As a family discuss the financial aspects of college. Cost to attend includes tuition, books, fee, and transcript room and board.
- 4th Start a detailed investigation of colleges that match your strengths, goals, locations, costs, social and academic environment
- 5th Prioritizes your list as to which factors is most important
- 6th Narrow your list to 8 – 12 colleges 3 - 4 Safe: 4 - 6 Target: 2 - 3 REACH colleges

The above steps should be completed by September of the senior year.

Typical college application deadlines

Rolling Admissions colleges: Recommended before Oct. 31st

Nov. 1st – 15: Early Action or Early Decision

Nov. 30th – University of California & California State University

Dec. 1st – University of Southern California and Arizona State University (priority deadline)

Jan 1st – Stanford, Ivy League Colleges

Fed. 1st – Nevada System of Higher Education (UNLV/UNR)

All application material must be postmarked, received or submitted online by the application deadline. This includes the completed application, application fee, essay, transcript, test scores, letters of rec., and anything else required by the college.

NOTIFICATIONS FROM THE COLLEGES:

YOU WILL HEAR FROM EVERY COLLEGE

Rolling: usually 6 to 12 weeks after application is completed

March: UC and many other colleges

April 1st The Ivy League colleges and highly selective colleges

NATIONAL NOTIFICATION DATE: May 1st ALL STUDENTS MUST NOTIFY ONE COLLEGE

The purpose of this chart is to assist you in selecting the college that is right for you. Make up your own chart, using category headings that are important to you. Make several copies of the chart, and give one to each family member or friend that will be part of your decision making process. Grade your colleges individually. Compare your selections. Make the choice that is right for YOU.

- List college names in the first column.
- Evaluate each school individually by category. Grade it from 0 to 5.
- Total the row across for each college.
- Rank order your totals.
- Compare your totals to other family members.

COLLEGE RANKING AND INFORMATION CHART

| College | Academics | | | Settings | | | Costs | | | Personal | | TOTALS |
|---------|------------|------------------|---------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|---------------|--------------|----------|------------|--------|
| | % Admitted | Major/ Interests | SAT/GPA Range | Location | Distance | Climate | Tuition | Financial Aid | Scholarships | Sports | Social Fit | |
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Now that you have narrowed you list of schools, use this form to keep track of where you are in the admissions process.

College Application Tracking Form

| Name of College or University | Application Deadline | Application Process (ED, EA, SCEA, Reg., Rolling) | Online or Paper? | Common Application? (Yes/No) |
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